

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 pending in the application. Claims 1-27 stand rejected.

Claims 1, 10, 15, 16, 20, 22, 24 and 26 have been amended in this Response. No claims have been added. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims in light of these amendments and the following remarks.

A. Rejections of Claims 1, 10, 16, 20, 22-24 and 26 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action dated November 5, 2003, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 10, 16, 20, 22-24 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang, et al. (U.S. Patent No 6,151,582) (HU), in view of Rumbaugh, et al. (Object oriented modeling and Design, 1991) (RU). Applicant respectfully submits this rejection is traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the non-conventional tree like structure is hierarchical in nature. No new matter has been added. (See, for instance, Specification as filed, Figure 21 and page 48, paragraph 00167: “The Case/Project Manager 46c1 layout (or ‘window screen display’ consists of a Menu Bar, Icons, and the current Project displayed as a hierarchical ‘tree like structure.’” Emphasis added.) Claim 1 as amended is indicative of the language used in the other pending independent claims (10, 16, 20, 22, 24 and 26). Claim 1 recites (with emphasis added):

1. (Currently amended) In a simulator system and used by an operator and including a source of input data, a display, and a simulator adapted to be executed by a processor and generating a set of simulation results during the execution in response to said input data, an organizing and managing system operatively interconnected between the source of the input data and said simulator and said display, comprising:

a case manager adapted for storing a plurality of sets and supersets of test data files, said sets and supersets of test data files being stored in said case manager in the form of a hierarchical, non-conventional tree like structure, the tree like structure being non-conventional in that said supersets underlying corresponding ones of said sets in said tree like structure, and further comprising one or more of said sets and said supersets of said test data files adapted to be selected by said operator; and

editing means responsive to said one or more of said sets and said supersets of said test data files selected by said operator via said case manager and responsive to said input data for editing said test data files and said input data in response to editing actions taken by said operator and generating a set of edited test data files, said simulator generating said set of simulation results during the execution of said simulator in response to said set of edited test data files.

The Examiner states that HU teaches “a simulation system used by an operator and including source of input data, a display, and a simulator adapted to be executed by a processor and generating a set of simulation results during the execution in response to the input data ..., an organizing and managing system..., one or more of the sets and supersets of test data..., editing means..., and the simulator generating a set of simulation results...” The Examiner further states that HU “teaches a case manager adapted for storing a plurality of sets and supersets of test data files, the sets and supersets of test data files being stored in the case manager in the form of a tree like structure.” The Examiner acknowledges, however, that HU does not teach the sets and supersets of test data files being stored in the case manager in the form of a non-conventional tree like structure, the tree like structure being non-conventional in that the supersets underlying corresponding ones of the sets in the tree-like structure.” The Examiner asserts that this deficiency is met by the RU reference. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Supersets as described in the instant application include all the data in a set of data, plus data not contained in the set, i.e., data from outside the set. This does not mean additional data which merely further describes the set. On page 42, bottom paragraph, second sentence, **RU** states, “A subclass is a special case of its superclass and should be compatible with it in every respect.” The Examiner’s attention is drawn to page 39 of **RU**, the third full paragraph (emphasis added):

“The notation for generalization is a triangle connecting a superclass to its subclasses. The superclass is connected by a line to the apex of the triangle. The subclasses are connected by lines to a horizontal bar attached to the base of the triangle.”

This notational form is useful in explaining the differences between the teaching of **RU** and the instant invention. Referring to the Figures 3.23 and 3.24 of **RU**, if there were, as in the instant invention, “supersets underlying corresponding ones of the sets in the tree-like structure,” then at least one of the triangles would be inverted with the apex pointing down to the bottom of the page. That would show a superset below its corresponding subset. There are no such inverted triangles in the disclosure of **RU**, as provided to Applicant. As the Examiner can see, in each of these figures, all the triangles depicted point to the top of the page, i.e. supersets are above (not below) their corresponding subsets in every case. **RU** does not depict a superclass below its corresponding class. For example, in Figure 3.23, **RU** shows “Equipment” being a superclass with respect to the class of “Tank.” Tank itself is a superclass, and is positioned below “Equipment” (for which it is a subclass), but Tank is a superclass only with respect to its own subclasses of “Spherical tank, Pressurized tank” Floating roof tank” and is positioned above those subclasses. Tank is not a superclass with respect to “Equipment,” as is shown by the figure wherein Equipment is connected to the apex of

the triangle, while Tank is connected to a horizontal line connected to the base of the triangle. So combining **RU** with **HU** will result in subclasses below their corresponding superclasses in a tree-like structure, but it will not result in superclasses being allowed to be below their corresponding subclasses, as in the instant invention.

RU thus presents nothing more than did **Bhandari et al** (“**BH**”) (UK Patent GB 2,293,667), cited in the previous office action of June 21, 2002. Both present conventional tree-like structures.

If **RU** were to teach a non-conventional tree-like structure, as in the instant invention, one might see Tank being also connected to a new horizontal line, positioned below the entry of “Tank,” the horizontal line being connected to the base of a new triangle, with the apex pointing towards the bottom of the page and the apex of the new triangle connected to a new class, such as “Uses of Fiberglass.” Equipment, including Tanks, may be a use of fiberglass, but the uses of fiberglass include classes outside of Tanks and Equipment. “Uses of Fiberglass” is thus a superclass with respect to both Tanks and Equipment, and may have additional subclasses, other than tanks, such as pipelines and insulation. In other words, there would be a superset below a corresponding subset, the superset containing information from outside the set of the higher entry, not just further limiting the set. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentable over the combination of **HU** and **RU**.

In responding to Applicant’s arguments responsive to the Office Action dated March 3, 2003, Examiner stated, in Paragraph 8.1 of the November 5, 2003 Office Action:

“As per the applicants’ argument tat “RU does not depict a superclass below its corresponding class; combining RU with HU

will result in subclasses below their corresponding superclasses in a tree-like structure, but it will not result in superclasses being allowed to be below their corresponding subclasses,” the examiner respectfully disagrees.

“Database organization is conceptual, all done by linked lists, starting from one element and proceeding to other elements. There is no data above another data and no data below other data. It is how you draw the diagram to explain the conceptual organization to others. One can as well turn the diagram upside down, so superclass is below the subclass.”

While the Examiner’s statement may be true for some forms of database organization, the Examiner’s statement does not apply to hierarchical structures, such as that recited in Claim 1. With hierarchical databases, one cannot just turn the paper upside down. Accordingly, with this clarification, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 as amended is in allowable form.

Like claim 1, claims 10, 16, 20, 22, 24 and 26 recite the hierarchical, non-conventional tree like structure and are thus felt to be likewise patentably distinct over the combination of **HU** and **RU**.

Claim 23 depends from claim 22 and contains all of its limitations as amended. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection has also been traversed with respect to claim 23.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection has been traversed and requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 10, 16, 20, 22, 23, 24 and 26

B. Rejection of Dependent Claims 2-9, 11-14, 17-19, 21, 25 and 27 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action dated March 3, 2003, the Examiner rejected Claims 2-9, 11-14, 17-19, 21, 25 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang, et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,582) (**HU**), in view of Rumbaugh, et al. (Object oriented

modeling and Design, 1991) (**RU**), and further in view of Cowgill (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,566) (**CO**).

Applicant respectfully submits that these claims all depend from independent claims described in Section A above and contain all of the limitations of the independent claims, as amended, from which they depend. For the reasons described in Section A, **HU** and **BH** do not render those independent claims obvious and the addition of **CO** does not supply the deficiencies of that combination. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection has also been traversed with respect to dependent claims 2, 9, 11-14, 17-19, 21, 25 and 27 and asks for reconsideration and allowance of those claims as well.

C. Rejection of Claim 15 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action dated March 3, 2003, the Examiner rejected Claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang, et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,582) (**HU**), in view of Rumbaugh, et al. (Object oriented modeling and Design, 1991) (**RU**), and further in view of Cowgill (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,566) (**CO**) and further in view of Gunsekara (U.S. Patent No. 6,018,497) (**GU**). Like the claims discussed in section A herein, Claim 15 as amended recites in part “and a plurality of supersets of case scenarios organized in a hierarchical, non-conventional tree-like structure, the tree like structure being non-conventional in that some of said case scenarios being supersets of other of said case scenarios in the tree-like structure with said supersets underlying corresponding ones of said sets in said tree like structure, ...” (Emphasis added.) For the reasons described above in Section A, a combination of **HU** and **BH** does not disclose or suggest

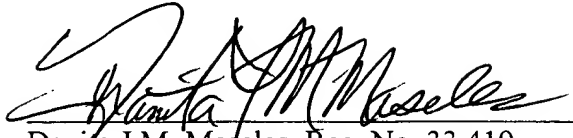
such a flexible, hierarchical, structure and the addition of **CO** and **GU** does not supply the deficiencies of that combination. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection has also been traversed with respect to claim 15 and asks for reconsideration and allowance of claim 15 as well.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that this application, as now amended, is in condition for allowance for the reasons stated above. Therefore, it is requested that the Examiner reconsider each and every rejection as applicable to the claims now pending in the application and pass such claims to issue.

This amendment is intended to be a complete response to the Office Action dated November 5, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosures

1. Transmittal Form (1 page);
2. Fee Transmittal Form (1 page);
3. Fee Determination Record (1 page);
4. Petition for Extension of Time (1 page);
5. Request for Continued Examination (1 page);
6. Amendment and Response to Office Action dated November 5, 2003 (26 pages);
7. Substitute Specification (61 pages);
8. Redline Substitute Specification (75 pages);
9. Postcard.



~~SIMULATION SYSTEM INCLUDING A SIMULATOR AND A CASE
MANAGER ADAPTED FOR ORGANIZING DATA FILES FOR THE
SIMULATOR IN A
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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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[0001] The subject matter of the present invention relates to a reservoir simulator apparatus and associated method responsive to a set of data for simulating an earth formation located in the vicinity of an oilfield reservoir and for displaying a set of simulation results in response to the simulation, and, more particularly, to a system including a case manager apparatus adapted for organizing and managing a set of test data used by the reservoir simulator, the simulator generating a set of simulation results and displaying the simulation results in response to the data.

[0002] Reservoir modeling is performed in order to predict the degree of underground deposits of hydrocarbon bearing formations in an earth formation. Typically, well logging operations are performed in the formation thereby producing well log data, and seismic operations are performed on the formation thereby producing seismic data. The seismic data is reduced thereby producing reduced seismic data. The well log data and the reduced seismic data are introduced, as input data, to a computer workstation which stores a gridding software and a simulator software. A gridding software, hereinafter known as "the Flogrid software" or the "Flogrid gridding software", is disclosed in prior pending U.S. patent application serial number 09/034,701, filed in the U.S. on March 4, 1998, which is based on a Great Britain patent application

number 9727288.4 filed December 24, 1997, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference into this specification. The "Flogrid" gridding software includes another gridding software known as "Petragrid". The "Petragrid" gridding software is disclosed in prior pending U.S. patent application serial number 08/873,234 filed June 11, 1997, the disclosure of which is also incorporated by reference into this specification. The gridding software will respond to the reduced seismic data and the well log data by gridding the earth formation which was subjected to the well log operation and the seismic operation. The type of grids imposed on the earth formation include structured (approximately rectangular) grids and unstructured (tetrahedral) grids. A property, such as permeability or water saturation, is assigned to each cell or grid block of the grid. As a result, a set of output data is generated by the gridding software, the set of output data including the plurality of cells/grid blocks of the grid and the respective plurality of properties associated with each of the cells of the grid. The set of output data from the gridding software are introduced, as input data, to a reservoir simulator software. The reservoir simulator software will respond to the set of output data from the gridding software by generating a plurality of simulation results which are associated, respectively, with the plurality of cells/grid blocks of the grid received from the gridding software. The plurality of simulation results and the plurality of cells/grid blocks associated therewith, generated by the reservoir simulator software, will be displayed on a 3D viewer of the workstation for observation by a workstation operator. Alternatively, the plurality of simulation results and the plurality of cells/grid blocks associated therewith can be recorded for observation by a workstation recorder.

[0003] The reservoir simulator software can model an oilfield reservoir. For example, in the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) publication

number 28545, concerning a transient tool for multiphase pipeline and well simulation, dated 1994, the authors have solved for pressure losses along a single pipeline using a technique related to conservation of material and conservation of pressure.

[0004] A similar technique has been applied to a network of pipelines or flowlines in the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) publication number 29125, authored by Litvak and Darlow. In this publication, the authors (Litvak and Darlow) have taken a network model (i.e., a network of pipelines) in which the pressure losses along the network branches can either be calculated from tables or from an analytical model, and the analytical model solves for three (3) conservations and pressures. In addition, in an article by the “Society of Petroleum Engineers” (SPE) 12259, each well being modeled in that article was characterized by three (3) variables: pressure, water fraction, and gas fraction.

[0005] As noted above, the set of output data from the gridding software (including the plurality of cells/grid blocks of the grid and the respective plurality of properties associated with each of the cells of the grid) are introduced, as input data, to the reservoir simulator software, and, responsive thereto, the reservoir simulator will generate a first set of simulation results which will be displayed for viewing by an operator. Another set of input data will subsequently be input to the reservoir simulator, and a second set of simulation results will be displayed for viewing by the operator. Still another set of input data will subsequently be input to the reservoir simulator, and a third set of simulation results will be displayed for viewing by the operator.

[0006] However, advances in technology over the last few years have meant that today’s reservoir engineer is faced with managing more data and making better informed decisions in a shorter time than ever before.

Technology has enabled more data to be incorporated, more complex models to be built, and more realizations to be studied. As a result, more data must be managed, more models must be created, and more results must be analyzed. Consequently, a reservoir engineer must continuously remember and keep track of a multitude of sets of input data which are being input to a reservoir simulator.

[0007] Therefore, some type of method and apparatus for automatically organizing and managing the input data (which are being input to the reservoir simulator) is necessary, and that apparatus would allow the reservoir engineer to efficiently manage the input data while creating new models and analyzing the results generated from those models.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] Accordingly, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a new and novel method and apparatus, hereinafter called a “case manager”, for automatically organizing and managing a plurality of sets of input data which are being provided to a reservoir simulator in order to allow a reservoir engineer to efficiently organize and manage that input data while creating new models and analyzing a plurality of sets of results generated from those new models.

[0009] In accordance with the above referenced object, it is a primary aspect of the present invention to provide a simulation system and associated method, which is responsive to a plurality of sets of input data, for simulating an earth formation located in the vicinity of an oilfield reservoir, generating a set of simulation results in response to the simulation, and displaying the set of simulation results, the simulation system including a case manager adapted for organizing and managing the plurality of sets of input data being used by the simulation system.

[00010] It is a further aspect of the present invention to provide the above referenced simulation system, wherein the case manager includes a plurality of case scenarios organized in a tree-like structure, some case scenarios being supersets of other case scenarios in the tree-like structure, an operator selecting one or more of the case scenarios in the case manager for submission to a simulator.

[00011] It is a further aspect of the present invention to provide the above referenced simulation system, wherein the simulation system further includes a case builder adapted for receiving the one or more of the case scenarios selected by the operator via the case manager, editing and/or changing a set of data disposed within the selected case scenarios in response to editing actions taken by the operator, and, responsive thereto, for generating a set of edited case scenarios for submission to the simulator.

[00012] It is a further aspect of the present invention to provide the above referenced simulation system, wherein the simulation system further includes said simulator adapted to be executed, a run manager interposed between the case builder and the simulator and responding to the set of edited case scenarios from the case builder for submitting the edited case scenarios from the case builder to the simulator and monitoring the edited case scenarios submitted to the simulator, and a results viewer/report generator for viewing and reporting the simulation results generated by the simulator, the simulator using the edited case scenarios during its execution to thereby generate a set of simulation results, the set of simulation results from the simulator being stored in a results file, the results viewer displaying the set of simulation results stored in the results file, the set of simulation results in the results file being transmitted back to the run manager, the run manager enabling

the operator to compare the edited case scenarios being submitted by the case builder to the simulator with the set of simulation results generated by the simulator and stored in the results file thereby allowing the operator to select one or more additional case scenarios via the case manager, as desired, for submission to the case builder, to the run manager, and to the simulator.

[00013] It is a further aspect of the present invention to provide the above referenced simulation system, wherein the simulation system responds to the set of simulation results generated by the simulator by displaying or reporting those simulation results, the simulation system including the results viewer for displaying the set of simulation results generated by the simulator and a report generator for generating one or more reports which record the set of simulation results, the results viewer displaying not only the set of simulation results but also any instantaneous changes being made to the set of simulation results at any point in time.

[00014] In accordance with these and other aspects of the present invention, a “simulation system” includes a workstation and a simulator (called “Eclipse”) which is a software package that is adapted to be stored in a memory of the workstation. The “Eclipse” simulator is originally stored on a CD-Rom, the simulator being subsequently loaded from the CD-Rom and stored in the memory of the workstation. The simulator will respond to certain “input data” during the pendency of its execution, and a resultant set of simulation results will be displayed on a 3D viewer.

[00015] In a prior pending application, a gridding software, known as “Flogrid”, generated a set of output data, the set of output data including a plurality of cells/grid blocks of a grid and a respective plurality of properties associated with each of the cells of the grid. The set of output

data from “Flogrid” are introduced, as the “input data”, to the simulator. The simulator responds to that “input data” by generating a plurality of simulation results which are associated, respectively, with the plurality of cells/grid blocks of the grid received from the “Flogrid” gridding software. The plurality of simulation results and the plurality of cells/grid blocks associated respectively therewith, generated by the simulator, are displayed on a 3D viewer of a workstation for observation by a workstation operator. The prior pending application is U.S. patent application serial number 09/034,701, filed in the U.S. on March 4, 1998 based on Great Britain patent application number 9727288.4 filed December 24, 1997, the disclosure of which has already been incorporated by reference into this specification.

[00016] However, in addition to the “Eclipse” simulator, the “simulation system” further includes a “display means” operatively connected to the simulator for displaying or reporting the set of simulation results generated by the simulator and an “organizing and managing system” (known as “Eclipse Office”), in accordance with the present invention, operatively interconnected between the Flogrid gridding software and the simulator for organizing and managing the “input data” from the gridding software that is ultimately input to the simulator and for enabling a comparison of the set of simulation results generated by the simulator with other types of the “input data”. The Eclipse Office “organizing and managing system”, in accordance with the present invention, further includes the following components: a case/project manager in accordance with one aspect of the present invention adapted for organizing and managing a set of input data being introduced as input data to the simulator, the case manager organizing and managing the set of input data by storing the set of input data in the case manager in the form of a “tree like structure”, a case builder/data manager, a run

manager, and a results file. The “display means” is operatively connected to the results file and further includes a results viewer and a report generator.

[00017] In operation, the case/project manager of the simulation system in accordance with one aspect of the present invention stores a plurality of different scenarios of test “input data”, that test “input data” being stored in the case/project manager in the form of a “tree-like” structure. As a result of the tree-like structure, the case/project manager will neatly organize and manage, for the operator, the test input data thereby enabling an operator of the workstation to select one or more of the different sets or supersets of the test input data stored in the tree like structure for introduction to the simulator. When the operator selects one or more of the test input data in the tree like structure of the case/project manager, that input data is temporarily stored in the case builder/data manager. The operator can now edit, via the case builder, the test input data that is temporarily stored in the case builder/data manager. Alternatively, other input data from other “pre-processor” programs (in addition to the input data from “Flogrid”) can be temporarily stored in the case builder/data manager and can be edited by the operator via the case builder/data manager. Alternatively, other “raw data” can be temporarily stored in the case builder/data manager and the operator can edit, via the case builder, that other raw data. When the “input data” in the case builder/data manager has been edited as desired by the operator, that “edited input data” is sent to the run manager, the run manager submitting that “edited input data” to the simulator. The run manager will monitor the “edited input data” submitted to the simulator. A processor of the workstation will execute the simulator software and, during that execution, the processor will simultaneously use the “edited input data” supplied to the simulator by

the run manager. When the execution of the simulator software is complete, a “set of simulation results” will be generated by the simulator. That “set of simulation results” will be stored in a “results file” of the simulation system. That “set of simulation results” stored in the “results file” will be transmitted back to the run manager where the operator will be able to compare via the run manager the “set of simulation results” stored in the results file with the “edited input data” being supplied by the case builder to the simulator. In addition, the “set of simulation results” stored in the results file will be simultaneously transmitted from the results file to the results viewer thereby allowing the workstation operator to view the “set of simulation results” stored in the results file. Based on that comparison, the operator at the workstation can then select “other test input data” stored in the tree like structure of the case/project manager and run that “other test input data” through the simulator in order to generate “other sets of simulation results” which can be stored in the results file and monitored via the run manager. That “other set of simulation results” from the results file can be sent to a results viewer on a workstation display for displaying the “other set of simulation results” and the “other set of simulation results” can be sent to a report generator for recording that “other set of simulation results” in the form of a written report that can be provided to the operator.

[00018] Further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description presented hereinafter. It should be understood, however, that the detailed description and the specific examples, while representing a preferred embodiment of the present invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become obvious to one skilled in the art from a reading of the following detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0001] A full understanding of the present invention will be obtained from the detailed description of the preferred embodiment presented hereinbelow, and the accompanying drawings, which are given by way of illustration only and are not intended to be limitative of the present invention, and wherein:

[0002] figures 1 and 2 illustrate a seismic operation for producing a reduced seismic data output record, the seismic operation of figure 1 including a data reduction operation;

[0003] figures 3, 4a, and 4b illustrate a more detailed construction of the data reduction operation of figure 1;

[0004] figure 5 illustrates a wellbore operation for producing a well log output record;

[0005] figures 6 and 7 illustrate a workstation adapted for storing a “Flogrid” software and an “Eclipse” simulator software;

[0006] figure 8 illustrates a more detailed construction of the “Flogrid” software of figure 7;

[0007] figure 9 illustrates an example of a typical output display generated by the “Eclipse” simulator software of figure 8 and produced on the 3D viewer of figure 8 ;

[0008] figure 10 illustrates the workstation of figures 6, and 7, however, the workstation memory of figure 10 stores the Flogrid software, the Eclipse Office software in accordance with the present invention, and the Eclipse simulator software, all of the aforementioned software being loaded into the workstation from a program storage device, such as a CD-Rom;

[0009] figures 11 and 12 illustrate the contents of the workstation memory of figure 10 and how the Eclipse Office software of the present invention interfaces between the Flogrid software, the Eclipse simulator software, and the workstation's 3D viewer of figure 10 which displays or reports results;

[00010] figure 13 illustrates a more detailed construction of the “display or report results” of figures 11 and 12 of the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” of figure 10, figure 13 further illustrating a more detailed construction of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention stored in the workstation memory of figure 10 which includes the case/project manager in accordance with the present invention, the case builder, the run manager, and the results files;

[00011] figure 14 illustrates how the “case/project manager” of figure 13 of the present invention (of the Eclipse Office software) structures the storage therein of the various subsets of test data, the test data being stored in the case manager in a ‘tree like fashion’ which allows an operator to select various types and sub-types of the test data;

[00012] figure 15 illustrates a flowchart or block diagram illustrating the construction and/or functional operation of the “case builder/data manager” of figure 13 which is part of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention;

[00013] figure 16 illustrates a flowchart or block diagram illustrating the construction and/or a functional operation of the “run manager” of figure 13 which is part of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention;

[00014] figure 17 illustrates a flowchart or block diagram illustrating a construction and/or a functional operation of the “results files” and the “display or report results” including the “results viewer” and the “report generator” of figure 13;

[00015] figure 18 illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram of the operation of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention, of figure 11;

[00016] figure 19 illustrates a dialog depicting the Eclipse Office application layout;

[00017] figure 20 illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram of the case/project manager of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention;

[00018] figure 21 illustrates a dialog depicting the case/project manager layout;

[00019] figure 22a1 to 22a2 illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram of the case builder/data manager of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention;

[00020] figure 22b1 to 22b2 illustrates a continuation of the workflow or functional block diagram of figure 22a of the case builder/data manager of the Eclipse Office software of the present invention;

[00021] figure 23 illustrates a dialog depicting the case builder/data manager layout;

[00022] figure 24 illustrates a dialog depicting a reservoir description layout;

[00023] figure 25 illustrates a dialog depicting a PVT layout;

[00024] figure 26 illustrates a dialog depicting a SCAL layout;

[00025] figure 27 illustrates a dialog depicting a Schedule layout;

[00026] figure 28 illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram of the run manager of the Eclipse office software of the present invention;

[00027] figure 29 illustrates a window display generated by the run manager;

[00028] figure 30 illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram of the results viewer of figure 13; and

[00029] figure 31 illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram of the report generator of figure 13.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[00030] Referring to figure 1, a method and apparatus for performing a seismic operation is illustrated. During a seismic operation, a source of acoustic energy or sound vibrations 10, such as an explosive energy source 10, produces a plurality of sound vibrations. In figure 1, one such sound vibration 12 reflects off a plurality of horizons 14 in an earth formation 16. The sound vibration(s) 12 is (are) received in a plurality of geophone-receivers 18 situated on the earth's surface, and the geophones 18 produce electrical output signals, referred to as "data received" 20 in figure 1, in response to the received sound vibration(s) 12 representative of different parameters (such as amplitude and/or frequency) of the sound vibration(s) 12. The "data received" 20 is provided as "input data" to a computer 22a of a recording truck 22, and, responsive to the "input data", the recording truck computer 22a generates a "seismic data output record" 24. Later in the processing of the seismic data output record 24, such seismic data undergoes "data reduction" 30 in a mainframe computer, and a "reduced seismic data output record" 24a is generated from that data reduction operation 30.

[00031] Referring to figure 2, another method and apparatus for performing a seismic operation is illustrated. Figure 2 was taken from a book entitled "Seismic Velocity Analysis and the Convolutional Model",

by Enders A. Robinson, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference into this specification.

[00032] In figure 2, the seismic operation of figure 1 is performed 10 different times. For example, when the explosive or acoustic energy source 10 is located at position 26 (the first position or position “0” along the surface of the earth) in figure 2, a first plurality of electrical signals from the geophones 18 are stored in the computer 22a in the recording truck 22. The explosive energy source is moved to position 28. When the explosive energy source 10 is located in position 28 (the second position or position “1” along the surface of the earth), a second plurality of electrical signals are stored in the computer 22a in the recording truck 22. The explosive energy source 10 is repeatedly and sequentially moved from positions “2” to “9” in figure 2 until it is located at position 32 (i.e. - position “9” which is the tenth position) on the surface of the earth. When the explosive energy source 10 is located in position 32 (the tenth position along the surface of the earth), a tenth plurality of electrical signals are stored in the computer 22a in the recording truck 22. As a result, in figure 2, the recording truck 22 of figure 1 records a “set of 3D seismic data” which consists of the 10 traces or ten sets of electrical signals, where each set of electrical signals comprises a plurality of electrical signals that originated from subsurface locations situated between position 26 and position 32 along the surface of the earth. A seismic data output record 24 will be generated by the computer 22a in the recording truck 22 which includes the “set of 3D seismic data” received from the geophones 18. The method and apparatus described above with reference to figures 1 and 2 represent a “3D seismic operation”.

[00033] Referring to figure 3, the seismic data output record 24 of figure 1 is provided as “input data” to a mainframe computer 30 where the data

reduction operation 30 of figure 1 is performed. A mainframe processor 30a will execute a data reduction software 30b stored in a mainframe storage 30b. When the execution of the data reduction software 30b is complete, the reduced seismic data output record 24a of figures 1 and 3 is generated.

[00034] Referring to figures 4a and 4b, a flowchart of the data reduction software 30b stored in the mainframe storage 30b of the mainframe computer 30 of figure 3 is illustrated. The data reduction software flowchart of figures 4a and 4b is taken from a book entitled “Seismic Velocity Analysis and the Convolutional Model” by Enders A. Robinson, the disclosure of which has already been incorporated by reference into this specification.

[00035] In figures 4a and 4b, the flowchart of the data reduction software 30b includes the following blocks: a demultiplexing block 30b1 connected to the input, a sorting block 30b2, a gain removal block 30b3, a frequency filtering block 30b4, a resampling block 30b5, a trace selection block 30b6, an output 30b7 labelled “selected gathers (velocity analyses)”, amplitude correction 30b8, deconvolution 30b9, a second output 30b10 labelled “CMP sorted traces after deconvolution”, a time corrections block 30b11, an AGC block 30b12, a stacking block 30b13, a third output 30b14 labelled “stacked traces (unfiltered)”, a frequency filtering block 30b15, another AGC block 30b16, a fourth output 30b17 labelled “stacked traces (filtered)”, a second input labelled “dip information” 30b18, a trace interpolation block 30b19, a migration block 30b20, a fifth output 30b21 labelled “migrated traces (unfiltered)”, a frequency filtering block 30b22, an AGC block 30b23, a sixth output 30b24 labelled “migrated traces (filtered)”, a time to depth correction block 30b25, and a seventh output 30b26 labelled “migrated traces

(depth migrated)". In the flowchart of figures 4a and 4b, any of the outputs 30b7, 30b10, 30b14, 30b17, 30b21, 30b24, and 30b26 can be used as the "reduced seismic data output record" 24a which is being provided as input data to the workstation discussed below and illustrated in figures 7 and 10 of the drawings.

[00036] Referring to figure 5, a well logging operation is illustrated. During the well logging operation, a well logging tool 34 is lowered into the earth formation 16 of figure 1 which is penetrated by a borehole 36. In response to the well logging operation, well log data 38 is generated from the well logging tool 34, the well log data 38 being provided as "input data" to a computer 40a of a well logging truck 40. Responsive to the the well log data 38, the well logging truck computer 40a produces a "well log output record" 42.

[00037] Referring to figures 6 and 7, a workstation 44 is illustrated in figure 6. A storage medium 46, such as a CD-Rom 46, stores software, and that software can be loaded into the workstation 44 for storage in the memory of the workstation. In figure 7, the workstation 44 includes a workstation memory 44a, the software stored on the storage medium (CD-Rom) 46 being loaded into the workstation 44 and stored in the workstation memory 44a. A workstation processor 44d will execute the software stored in the workstation memory 44a in response to certain input data provided to the workstation processor 44d, and then the processor 44d will display or record the results of that processing on the workstation "recorder or display or 3D viewer" 44e. The input data, that is provided to the workstation 44 in figure 7, includes the well log output record 42 and the reduced seismic data output record 24a. The "well log output record" 42 represents the well log data generated during the well logging operation in an earth formation of figure 5, and the "reduced

seismic data output record" 24a represents data-reduced seismic data generated by the mainframe computer 30 in figure 3 in response to the seismic operation illustrated in figure 1. In figure 7, the software stored on the storage medium (CD-Rom) 46 in figure 7 includes a "Flogrid" software 46a and an "Eclipse" simulator software 46b. When the storage medium (CD-Rom) 46 is inserted into the workstation 44 of figure 7, the "Flogrid" software 46a and the "Eclipse" simulator software 46b, stored on the CD-Rom 46, are both loaded into the workstation 44 and stored in the workstation memory 44a. The "Flogrid" software 46a is fully described and set forth in pending U.S. patent application serial number 09/034,701, filed in the U.S. on March 4, 1998, which is based on prior pending Great Britain patent application number 9727288.4 filed December 24, 1997, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference into this specification. When the workstation processor 44d executes the Flogrid software 46a and the Eclipse simulator software 46b, the "Eclipse" simulator software 46b responds to a set of more accurate grid cell property information associated with a respective set of grid blocks of a structured simulation grid generated by the "Flogrid" software 46a by further generating a set of more accurate simulation results which are associated, respectively, with the set of grid blocks of the simulation grid. Those simulation results are displayed on the 3D viewer 44e of figure 7 and can be recorded on a recorder 44e.

[00038] Referring to figures 8 and 9, referring initially to figure 8, the Flogrid software 46a and the Eclipse simulator software 46b are illustrated as being stored in the workstation memory 44a of figure 7. In addition, in figure 8, the "simulation results", which are output from the Eclipse simulator software 46b in figure 8, are illustrated as being received by and displayed on the 3D viewer 44e of figure 7.

[00039] In figure 8, the Flogrid software 46a includes a reservoir data store, a reservoir framework, a structured gridder, an unstructured gridder, and an upscaler, all of which are fully discussed in the above referenced prior pending U.S. patent application serial number 09/034,701, filed in the U.S. on March 4, 1998, the disclosure of which has already been incorporated by reference into this specification. A set of “simulation grids and properties associated with the grids” 47, generated by the upscaler and the “Petragrid” unstructured gridder, are received in the Eclipse simulator software 46b. In response, the Eclipse simulator software 46b generates a “set of simulation results associated, respectively, with a set of grid blocks of the simulation grids” 48, and the simulation results and the associated grid blocks 48 are displayed on the 3D viewer 44e.

[00040] In figure 9, an example of the “set of simulation results associated, respectively, with a set of grid blocks of the simulation grids” 48, which are displayed on the 3D viewer 44e of the workstation 44 of figures 6, 7, and 8, is illustrated ~~in figure 9.~~

[00041] Referring to figures 10 through 17, the Eclipse Office software of the present invention is discussed in the following paragraphs with reference to figures 10 through 17 of the drawings.

[00042] In figure 10, the workstation 44 of figure 7 is illustrated again ~~in figure 10.~~ However, in figure 10, the storage medium (CD-Rom) 46 stores the Flogrid software 46a, the Eclipse simulator software 46b, and the Eclipse Office software 46c of the present invention interposed between the Flogrid software 46a and the Eclipse simulator software 46b. When the CD-Rom 46 is inserted into the workstation 44, the Eclipse Office software 46c in addition to the Flogrid software 46a and the Eclipse simulator software 46b are loaded from the storage medium (CD-

Rom) 46 into the workstation memory 44a of figure 10. As a result, as shown in figure 10, the workstation memory 44a now stores three software packages: the Flogrid software 46a, the Eclipse office software 46c of the present invention, and the Eclipse simulator software 46b.

[00043] In figure 11, the Flogrid software 46a, the Eclipse office software 46c and the Eclipse simulator software 46b stored in the workstation memory 44a of figure 10 is again illustrated. In operation, referring to figure 11, the Flogrid software 46a passes certain data files to the Eclipse office software 46c of the present invention. In response, the Eclipse office software 46c passes edited versions of those same data files to the Eclipse simulator software 46b. When the Eclipse simulator software 46b is executed by the workstation processor 44d of figure 10, the simulator software 46b uses the edited versions of the data files received from the Eclipse office software 46c. In response, simulation results are generated by the Eclipse simulator software 46b, and those simulation results are passed back to the Eclipse office software 46c, the Eclipse office software 46c displaying the simulation results on a recorder or display or 3D viewer 44e. The recorder or display or 3D viewer 44e functions to “display or report results” 44e1. Consequently, the simulation results generated by the Eclipse simulator software 46b and passed through the Eclipse office software 46c will be displayed or reported via the “display or report results” 44e1 in figure 11.

[00044] In operation, in figure 12, the Eclipse Office software 46c receives the data files associated with the raw data 50 and the data files generated by the pre-processor programs 52 and, responsive thereto, the Eclipse Office software 46c will collect all such data files and pass edited versions of such data files to the Eclipse simulator software 46b. The Eclipse simulator software 46b ~~be~~ is executed by workstation processor

44d of figure 10. However, during the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b by the workstation processor 44d of figure 10, the Eclipse simulator software 46b will receive and utilize the data files associated with the raw data 50 of figure 12 and/or the data files generated by the pre-processor programs 52 of figure 12; and, during that execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b, in response to these aforementioned data files, the Eclipse simulator software 46b will be generating a "set of simulation results". That "set of simulation results" will be passed back from the Eclipse simulator software 46b to the Eclipse Office software 46c. When the Eclipse Office software 46c receives that "set of simulation results", the Eclipse Office software 46c will be re-transmitting that "set of simulation results" to the "recorder or display or 3D viewer" 44e of figures 10 through 12 for displaying and/or recording that "set of simulation results" on the 3D viewer 44e at each instantaneous point in time. Bear in mind that the "set of simulation results" will be generated from the Eclipse simulator software 46b during its execution by the workstation processor 44d, and that "set of simulation results" will be instantaneously displayed, by the Eclipse Office software 46c at each point in time, on the "recorder or display or 3D viewer" 44e of figure 12. As a result, the Eclipse Office software 46c will instantaneously "display or report results" 44e1 in response to the raw data files 50 and/or in response to the data files provided by the pre-processor programs 52, both during and after the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b by the workstation processor 44d. Refer now to figure 13 for a more complete description of this functional operation.

[00045] The SCAL 52c pre-processor program 52, licensed and/or sold by GeoQuest, a division of Schlumberger Technology Corporation, is a tool to help engineers effectively use lab derived relative permeability and

capillary pressure measurements in reservoir simulation. The Schedule 52d1 pre-processor program 52, also licensed and/or sold by GeoQuest, a division of Schlumberger Technology Corporation, enables engineers to accurately and efficiently prepare well production and completion data that is used by the Eclipse simulator software 46b. The Schedule program 52d1 helps users to access well data from industry standard and company databases and transform it into well and group control keywords that the Eclipse simulator software 46b understands. The VFPi pre-processor program 52d2 (“Vertical Flow Performance Modeling Program”) enables engineers to construct the comprehensive lift curves used by the Eclipse simulator software 46b to calculate pressure losses in wells and gathering system networks.

[00046] In operation, in figure 12, the Eclipse Office software 46c receives the data files associated with the raw data 50 and the data files generated by the pre-processor programs 52 and, responsive thereto, the Eclipse Office software 46c will collect all such data files and pass edited versions of such data files to the Eclipse simulator software 46b. The Eclipse simulator software 46b be executed by workstation processor 44d of figure 10. However, during the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b by the workstation processor 44d of figure 10, the Eclipse simulator software 46b will receive and utilize the data files associated with the raw data 50 of figure 12 and/or the data files generated by the pre-processor programs 52 of figure 12; and, during that execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b, in response to these aforementioned data files, the Eclipse simulator software 46b will be generating a “set of simulation results”. That “set of simulation results” will be passed back from the Eclipse simulator software 46b to the Eclipse Office software 46c. When the Eclipse Office software 46c receives that “set of simulation results”, the Eclipse Office software 46c will be re-

transmitting that “set of simulation results” to the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figures 10 through 12 for displaying and/or recording that “set of simulation results” on the 3D viewer 44e at each instantaneous point in time. Bear in mind that the “set of simulation results” will be generated from the Eclipse simulator software 46b during its execution by the workstation processor 44d, and that “set of simulation results” will be instantaneously displayed, by the Eclipse Office software 46c at each point in time, on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figure 12. As a result, the Eclipse Office software 46c will instantaneously “display or report results” 44e1 in response to the raw data files 50 and/or in response to the data files provided by the pre-processor programs 52, both during and after the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b by the workstation processor 44d. Refer now to figure 13 for a more complete description of this functional operation.

[00047] In figure 13, the Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 12 includes a case/project manager 46c1, a case builder/data manager 46c2, a run manager 46c3, and a results file 46c4. The “display or report results” 44e1 generated on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e1 of figures 11 and 12 includes a results viewer 1A and a report generator 1B. In figure 13, in response to an “output” generated from the run manager 46c3 (where said “output” consists of a plurality of data files, possibly including a plurality of ‘test data’ files compiled by the case manager 46c1, intended to be used by the Eclipse simulator software 46b during its execution), the Eclipse simulator software 46b will be executed by the workstation processor 44d of figure 10 and, responsive to that execution, the Eclipse simulator software 46b of figure 13 will generate a “set of simulation results”. That “set of simulation results” will be stored in the “results file” 46c4 of the Eclipse office

software 46c. That “set of simulation results” stored in the results file 46c4 will be read by the results viewer 1A and the report generator 1B of figure 13. As a consequence, the results viewer 1A will display a “set of results” and the report generator 1B will report or record that “set of results” on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figures 10 through 12.

[00048] The functions provided by the case manager 46c1, the case builder 46c2, the run manager 46c3, and the results files 46c4 in addition to the results viewer ~~44e1~~ 1A and the report generator ~~44e2~~ 1B, will become evident in the following paragraphs with reference to figures 14 through 17 of the drawings.

[00049] In figure 14, a dialog or screen display, which is produced on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figure 10 by the case/project manager 46c1 of figure 13, is illustrated. This screen display depicts the manner by which the case/project manager 46c1 structures the storage therein of the various data files or “case scenarios” that are used by the simulator software 46b. In figure 14, the screen display which is generated by the case/project manager 46c1 of figure 13 consists of a plurality of “test data files” or “case scenarios” arranged in a “tree-like structure”. For example, in figure 14, one test data file is called “new” 56. The “new” test data file 56 can be divided into two sub-parts: a first subpart test data file “new-1” 58 and a second subpart test data file “new-2” 60, the “new-1” 58 and the “new-2” 60 data files being two different supersets of the “new” 56 data file. The first subpart/test data file “new-1” 58 is subdivided into two further test data files: “new-1-0” 62 and “new-1-1” 64, each being a different superset of the “new-1” 58 data file. The “new-1-0” test data file 62 can be subdivided into two further sub-parts/data files: a “new-1-0-0” test data file 66 and a “new-1-0-1”

test data file 68, each being a different superset of the “new-1-0” 62 data file. The other subparts/data files are also subdivided in a similar manner; for example, the “new-1-1” subpart/data file 64 is divided into two further data files: the “new-1-1-0” subpart/data file 70 and the “new-1-1-1” subpart/data file 72, each being a different superset of the “new-1-1” 64 data file. The “new-2” subpart/data file 60 is divided into three other subparts/data files: the “new-2-0” 74 data file, the “new-2-1” 76 data file, and the “new-2-2” 78 data file, each being a different superset of the “new-2” data file 60; and the subpart/data file “new-2-0” 74 is itself subdivided into yet another subpart/data file: the “new-2-0-0” 80 which is a superset of the “new-2-0” 74 data file.

[00050] In accordance with one major aspect of the present invention, the subdivisions of “test data files” or “case scenarios” illustrated in the case/project manager 46c1 screen display of figure 14 indicate that the case/project manager 46c1 of figure 13 stores therein a “plurality of test data files” or “case scenarios”, and those test data files/case scenarios are subdivided into further subdivisions of test data files, and those further subdivisions of test data files can be subdivided into yet further subdivisions of test data files. In other words, the “plurality of test data files” stored in the case/project manager 46c1 of figure 13 and 14 are stored in the case/project manager 46c1 in the form of a particular structure that can only be described as a “tree like structure”. The operator sitting at the workstation 44 of figure 10 can select one or more subparts or subdivisions of those “test data files” 56 through 80 of figure 14 as desired, the selected subparts or subdivisions of data files being used by the Eclipse simulator software 46b, during the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b, to generate the results file 46c4 of figure 13. For example, in figure 14, the operator at workstation 44 can select the “new” data file 56; or the operator can select the “new-1” data file 58;

or the operator can select the “new-2” data file 60; or the operator can select the “new-2-0-0” data file 80, etc. The function performed by the case/project manager 46c1 (in storing the test data files therein in the form of a “tree like structure” and enabling the operator to select various sets and supersets of the stored test data files for use by the simulator software 46b) will become more evident from a reading of the following description of the Eclipse Office software 46c of the present invention.

[00051] In figure 15, a functional block diagram of the case builder/data manager 46c2 of figure 13 is illustrated. The case builder/data manager 46c2 includes a reservoir description 82 consisting of a storage medium supplied with keywords (“K”) originating from either the “case definition” 81 or the Flogrid preprocessor program 46a, a PVT storage medium 84 consisting of keywords (K) supplied by the PVTi preprocessor program 52b, a SCAL storage medium 86 consisting of keywords (K) supplied by the SCAL preprocessor program 52c, an “Initialization” block 88, a Schedule/Production storage medium 92 supplied with keywords (K) originating from the Schedule 52d1 and the VFPI 52d2 preprocessor programs 52d, a “Summary” block 90, and a “Simulation file” block 93 consisting of a collection of keywords (K). The Summary block 90 contains keywords which identify which vectors the operator wants to be output by the Eclipse simulator software 46b during the execution of the simulator. More particularly, the Summary block 90 allows the operator at workstation 44 to select one or more of a multitude of outputs or “vectors” generated from the Eclipse simulator software 46b; and this is significant since, when the one or more outputs or vectors from the simulator software 46b are selected, those particular selected outputs or vectors are stored in the Results file 46c4 of figure 13. The Initialization block 88 contains keywords which instruct exactly how to initialize the model. The case definition 81 consists of a collection of keywords (K)

supplied by the case/project manager 46c1. Those keywords, initially stored in the case definition 81, are supplied to the various storage media 82, 84, 86, 88, 92, and 90. Keywords "K" 95, 97, 99, 101, and 103 are supplied, respectively, by the Flogrid 46a, PVTi 52b, SCAL 52, Schedule 52d1, and VFPI 52d2 pre-processor programs, and are transmitted to for storage in the Reservoir Description 82, the PVT 84, the SCAL 86, and the Schedule/Production 92 storage mediums. Keywords "K" are already stored in the "Initialization" 88 storage medium and the "Summary" 90 storage medium. In operation, in figure 15, the operator at workstation 44 of figure 10 can now edit the keywords "K" stored in any one or more of the following "particular storage media": Reservoir Description 82, PVT 84, SCAL 86, Initialization 88, Schedule/Production 92, and Summary 90. When the keywords "K" in the one or more of the "particular storage media" have been edited by the operator at workstation 44, a set of "newly edited keywords" (K) 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, and 115 are generated from the "particular storage media" and those "newly edited keywords" (as represented by "All Keywords" 117 in figure 15) are stored in the Simulation File 93 in figure 15. The "newly edited keywords" stored in the Simulation File 93 are now available to and are transmitted to the Run Manager 46c3.

[00052] In figure 16, a functional block diagram of the run manager 46c3 of figure 13 is illustrated. The run manager 46c3 can select vectors if applicable, block 96 of figure 16. If the simulation file 93 from the case builder 46c2 is too large, in order to avoid overloading memory, the run manager 46c3 can select certain vectors 96 associated with only a "subset of the simulation file" 93, and then the run manager 46c3 will "submit run" 119; that is, the run manager 46c3 will submit only that particular "subset of the simulation file" 93 (which was selected via the 'select vectors' 96) to the Eclipse simulator 46b for use by the simulator

46b during its execution by the workstation processor 44d of figure 10 (block 119 of figure 16). In addition, the run manager 46c3 will monitor the “run submitted to the simulator 46b” (see the “monitor run” block 121 in figure 16). As a result, in response to the receipt by the simulator 46b of only that particular “subset of the simulation file” 93, when the simulator 46b is executed, a “subset of results” will be generated from the simulator 46b, the “subset of results” corresponding to the particular “subset of the simulation file” 93. The “subset of results”, corresponding to the particular “subset of the simulation file” 93, will be stored in the results file 46c4 of figures 13 and 16. In figure 16, the “subset of results” stored in the results file 46c4 of figure 16 will be transmitted back to “monitor run” block 121. Now, the “monitor run” block 121 is receiving both the “run submitted to the simulator 46b” and the “subset of results” stored in the results file 46c4 thereby allowing the operator to compare the run being submitted by the case builder to the simulator 46b with the “subset of results” being generated by the simulator 46b. In addition, that “subset of results” stored in the results file 46c4 will also be displayed on the results viewer 1A of the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figure 10 and/or the “subset of results” will be reported to the operator via the report generator 1B.

[00053] In any event, in figure 16, the simulation file 93, or the “subset of the simulation file” 93, will be submitted to the Eclipse simulator software 46b, block 119 in figure 16. During the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b by the workstation processor 44d, the simulation file 93 (or the “subset of the simulation file” 93) will be used by the simulator 46b, and, responsive to that execution of the simulator software 46b, a display will be produced on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figure 10, that display representing and corresponding to the test data in the “simulation file” 93, or to the test data in the

“subset of the simulation file” 93. In figure 16, the run manager 46c3 will monitor (via the “monitor run” block 121 in figure 16) the “run submitted to the simulator 46b” and said “monitor run” block 121 will enable the operator to compare the run being submitted to the simulator with the set of simulation results being generated by the simulator. In addition, the results viewer 1A will instantaneously display the “subset of results” which are generated from the simulator 46b in response to the “run submitted to the simulator 46b”.

[00054] In figure 17, a functional block diagram of the “display or report results” 44e1 of figure 13 and of the “results file” 46c4 of figure 13 is illustrated. In figure 17, the results file 46c4 will include the following information: “simulation results” which pertain to grids 54a, a summary 54b, restart 54c, and initialization 54d. In figure 17, the “display or report results” 44e1 includes the results viewer 1A and the report generator 1B of figure 13. However, in addition, the “display or report results” 44e1 of figure 17 will also “open the summary” 1C (that is, it will open the summary 54b results file 46c4), “select vectors or solutions” 1D (which will select certain of the summary information 54b), “open grids” 1E (that is, open the “grids” 54a results file), “select vectors or select solutions” 1F (which will select certain of the grids information 54a), “open restart and initialization” 1G (that is, open the restart 54c and the initialization 54d results files), and “select vectors or select solutions” 1H (which will select certain of the restart and initialization information 54c and 54d), prior to displaying the selected summary information 1C and the selected grids information 1E and the selected restart and initialization information 1G on the results viewer 1A and/or reporting that same information on the report generator 1B. As a result, in figure 17, when the summary results file 54b is opened by the open summary block 1C, and the grids results file 54a is opened by open grid block 1E,

and the restart results file 54c and the initialization results file 54d are opened by the open restart and initialization block 1G of figure 17, all the selected “simulation results” stored in the results files 46c4 of figure 17 will be made available to the results viewer 1A (which will display those “simulation results”), and all the selected “simulation results” stored in the results files 46c4 will be made available to the report generator 1B (which will select reports and solutions and interpolate vectors and generate a written report for management that will document those “simulation results”).

[00055] A functional description of the operation of the Eclipse Office software 46c of figure 10 of the present invention, and, in particular, the case/project manager software 46c1 of figure 13 of the Eclipse Office software 46c of the present invention, will be set forth in the following paragraphs with reference to figures 10 through 17 of the drawings.

[00056] In figure 10, a program storage device, such as the the CD-Rom 46, has stored thereon the Flogrid software 46a, the Eclipse office software 46c, and the Eclipse simulator software 46b. That CD-Rom 46 is inserted into the workstation 44 of figure 10, and the Flogrid software 46a, the Eclipse office software 46c, and the Eclipse simulator software 46b are loaded from the CD-Rom 46 for storage into the workstation memory 44a of the workstation 44 of figure 10. When the Flogrid, Eclipse simulator, and Eclipse Office software are stored in the workstation memory 44a, one configuration of that software stored in memory 44a is illustrated in figure 12. In figure 12, certain “raw data” 50 is provided to the Eclipse Office software 46c. In addition, certain other input data, provided by the preprocessor programs 52 of figure 12, are also provided to the Eclipse Office software 46c. In figure 13, that raw data 50 and the other input data from the preprocessor programs 52

are provided as “input data” to the case builder/data manager 46c2 of figure 13.

[00057] However, in addition to the input “raw data” 50 and the other input data originating from the preprocessor programs 52 (which are all being made available to the case builder 46c2 of figure 13), the case/project manager 46c1 of figure 13, in accordance with one major aspect of the present invention, also contains a plurality of additional “test data files” which can also be made available to the case builder/data manager 46c2. Those additional “test data files” are illustrated in figure 14. In figure 14, those additional “test data files” are stored in the case/project manager 46c1 in a “tree-like” fashion. That is, those “test data files” are stored in the case/project manager 46c1 of figure 13 in the form of a “tree”. For example, the broadest category of the test data files or “case scenarios” stored in the case/project manager 46c1 is the “new” 56 test data file of figure 14. However, if the user/operator wants to select certain other supersets of that “new” 56 test data file, the operator would then select either the “new-1” 58 superset test data file, or the “new-2” 60 superset test data file. On the other hand, if the operator wants to select still other supersets of the “new-1” 58 superset test data file or the “new-2” 60 ~~subset~~ superset test data file, the operator can select any one or more of the following supersets of the superset test data files 58 or 60: supersets 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72 for the superset test data file 58, and supersets 74, 76, 78, or 80 for the superset test data file 60 of figure 14. Each superset of the test data files of the case manager 46c1 of figure 14 contains certain unique parameters which are useful when running the Eclipse simulator software 46b. As a result, the operator sitting at the workstation 44 of figure 10 may want to select one or more of the supersets of test data files 56 through 80 in figure 14 in order to study the resulting “results”

stored in the results files 46c4 of figure 13 which are generated when the selected one or more supersets of test data files 56 through 80 are used by the simulator 46b. The operator can study those “results”, stored in the results files 46c4, by viewing those “results” on the results viewer 1A of figure 13 or reading a report of those results on a report generated by the report generator 1B of figure 13.

[00058] In any event, in figure 13, if the raw data 50 is received by the case builder 46c2, the case builder 46c2 will allow the operator to edit that raw data 50, and the case builder 46c2 of figure 13 will present the edited raw data 50 to the run manager 46c3 for submission of that edited raw data 50 to the Eclipse simulator 46b. On the other hand, if the keyword data from the preprocessor programs 52 are received by the case builder 46c2, the case builder 46c2 will allow the operator to edit the preprocessor program 52 keyword data, and the edited preprocessor program keyword data will be submitted by the case builder 46c2 to the run manager 46c3 for submission of that data to the Eclipse simulator 46b. However, if the operator selects one or more of the sets or supersets of the test data files 56 through 80 in the case manager 46c1 of figure 14, the one or more selected sets or supersets of test data files in the case manager 46c1 (one or more of 56 - 80) will be submitted by the case manager 46c1 to the case builder 46c2 of figure 13, and the case builder 46c2 will allow the operator sitting at the workstation 44 to edit those test data files. The resulting edited test data files will be submitted by the case builder 46c2 to the run manager 46c3 for submission of the edited test data files to the Eclipse simulator 46b.

[00059] In figure 15, the case builder 46c2 will receive a case definition 81, consisting of a collection of keywords, from the case manager 46c1 of figure 13. Recall that the case definition 81 contains a collection of

keywords representing the one or more sets or supersets of test data files that were selected by the operator via one or more of the “sets” or “supersets” of data files stored in the case manager “tree like structure” of figure 14. The case definition 81 keywords are made available to the various storage media 82, 84, 86, 88, 92, and 90 in figure 15. In addition, the keywords 95, 97, 99, 101, and 103 from the pre-processor programs 52 (and from the raw data 50) are also made available to the various storage media 82, 84, 86, and 92 in figure 15. The operator at the workstation 44 of figure 10 can now edit, as desired, the keywords stored in the various storage media 82, 84, 86, 88, 92, and 90 in figure 15. As a result, when this editing operation performed by the operator is complete, a set or collection of “edited keywords” 117 of figure 15 (keywords 105 through 115) are stored in the simulation file 93 of figure 15. These “edited keywords” 117 of figure 15, stored in the simulation file 93, now represent a set of “edited test data files” which will be submitted by the case builder 46c2 to the run manager 46c3.

[00060] The “edited test data files” will be submitted by the case builder 46c2 to the run manager 46c3. The run manager 46c3, in figures 13 and 16, will submit the edited test data files to the Eclipse simulator 46b (see the “submit run” block 119 in figure 16), and the run manager 46c3 will monitor the “edited test data files” (see “monitor run” block 121 of figure 16). When the simulator 46b is executed in response to the “edited test data files”, a set of “simulation results” will be generated from the simulator 46b, and those “simulation results” will be stored in the results file 46c4. Furthermore, those “simulation results” stored in the results files 46c4 will be made available to the results viewer 1A and/or the report generator 1B in figure 16. As a result, the “simulation results” will be displayed on the results viewer 1A of the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figures 10 and 13, and the “simulation results” can be

recorded on a report via the report generator 1B. However, in figure 16, in addition, the “simulation results” stored in the results files 46c4 will be transmitted back from the results files 46c4 to the “monitor run” block 121 of the run manager 46c3. Since the “monitor run” block 121 is already monitoring the “edited test data files” being submitted by the case builder 46c2 to the simulator 46b, the operator at workstation 44 of figure 10 is able to visually compare, via the ‘monitor run’ block 121 of the run manager 46c3, the “edited test data files” (or case scenarios) being submitted to the simulator 46b with the “simulation results” being generated from the simulator 46b. At this point, as a result of the aforementioned visual comparison being performed by the run manager 46c3, the operator can now select other test data files or case scenarios stored in the case manager 46c1 thereby sending these other case scenarios to the case builder 46c2 for editing and submitting the edited other case scenarios from the case builder 46c2 to the simulator 46b.

[00061] In figure 13, when either the edited raw data 50, or the edited preprocessor program data 52, or the edited test data (56 - 80) are submitted to the Eclipse simulator software 46b, and when the Eclipse simulator software 46b is executed by the workstation processor 44d in response to that data, the Eclipse simulator software 46b will generate a set of “results files” 46c4 in figure 13. Those “results files” 46c4 will be made available to the results viewer 1A (of the display 44e of figure 10) and to the report generator 1B (of the recorder 44e of figure 10). The operator sitting at the workstation 44 can view those results on the display 44e via the results viewer 1A, or he can read a report of those results, which report is generated by the report generator 1B. In actual practice, in figure 17, the “display or report results” 44e1 will open the summary results file 54b, open the grids results file 54a, open the restart results file 54c, and open the initialization results file 54d. At this point,

all the set of “simulation results” files which are stored in the “results file” 46c4 will be opened, and these “simulation results” are made available to the results viewer 1A, and to the report generator 1B. As a result, during the execution of the Eclipse simulator software 46b in figure 13, certain “simulation results” will be stored in the results files 46c4, and those “simulation results” will instantaneously be made available for viewing by the operator at workstation 44 by instantaneously displaying those “simulation results” in the results files 46c4 on the results viewer 1A, and instantaneously reporting those “simulation results” in the results files 46c4 on a written report which is generated via the report generator 1B.

[00062] A more detailed description of the structure and the functional operation of the Eclipse Office software 46c of figure 13 of the present invention will be set forth in the following “Eclipse Office software 46c Functional Specification” with reference to figures 18 through 31 of the drawings.

[00063] Eclipse Office Software 46c Functional Specification

[00064] Refer now to figures 18 through 31.

[00065] As a result of advances in technology over the last few years, the reservoir engineer must manage more data and make better informed decisions in a shorter period of time. That technology has enabled more data to be incorporated, more complex models to be built, and more realizations to be studied. However, as a further result, more data must be managed, more models must be created, and more results must be analyzed. The Eclipse Office software 46c of figure 10 provides the tools which allows the reservoir engineer to efficiently manage these tasks and thus concentrate on the engineering input and analysis. Consequently, the Eclipse Office software 46c will allow the reservoir engineer to create

his model quickly, manage his data efficiently, and control his run effectively. The Eclipse Office software 46c: (1) allows for the import of raw data required for a simulation, (2) contains a suite of base level tools allowing the creation and manipulation of engineering data required for a simulation, and (3) provides a means for using more advanced tools within external packages to manipulate the data. Therefore, the Eclipse Office software 46c will provide an environment for all simulation related tasks (create/view/edit/manage data, view/analyze results, control/submit runs, and generate reports). Furthermore, the Eclipse Office product software 46c removes the need for manual editing of data, removes the need for macros to run individual programs, it is intuitive for a novice user, and it is complete for the experienced user.

[00066] 1.0 Introduction

[00067] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figure 10 will provide the user with an environment within which engineering analysis can be conducted. These analyses will initially be focused on numerical simulation; however, the Eclipse Office software 46c design allows other engineering techniques to be used should new modules be developed. The following paragraphs will set forth both the engineering requirements and the specifications of the Eclipse Office software 46c, and establish its relationships to other products.

[00068] User Profile

[00069] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will become the preferred method of performing simulation related activities, and it will be an environment within which it will be possible to easily and efficiently conduct the full range of reservoir engineering tasks.

[00070] The expected users of the Eclipse Office software 46c will be petroleum engineers. The end users must have knowledge of the process of simulation, since the natural flow of the Eclipse Office product will follow this process.

[00071] 2.0 Requirements

[00072] Major limitations restricting the growth of reservoir simulation are in its ease of use, level of required experience, and quantity of input data. These impact the market in different ways but all reinforce the idea that simulation is difficult and time consuming. In addition, reservoir engineering analysis (such as decline curve, material balance, or simple network analysis) are often conducted using spreadsheets, and yet the raw data for these are the same as the raw data for simulation. While the Eclipse Office software 46c is a self contained product, in terms of its data generation and analysis tools, it requires a knowledge of the system in which it is installed, and the availability of other software products, especially the simulator engines. The main work path through the Eclipse Office product software 46c is illustrated in figure 18.

[00073] Referring to figure 18, the Eclipse Office software 46c workflow or functional block diagram is illustrated. In figure 18, the Eclipse Office software 46c workflow starts with project setup, 102, followed by case definition, 104. The next step involves defining and analyzing reservoir properties, 106. The model is run, 108. The operator will now manage the run, 110, analyze the results and produce a scenario report, 112, and produce a case report 114. When analyzing the results and producing the scenario report (112), different scenarios 116 can be selected (see case/project manager 46c1 in figure 13) and steps 106 through 112 can be repeated.

[00074] The Eclipse Office software 46c concept provides three main functions: (1) it provides a structured, easy to use means to generate numerical reservoir models quickly, (2) it manages input and output data, and (3) it executes existing pre and post processors. The integration of existing, other software products into the Eclipse Office environment allows those other products to provide their fully advanced functionality in a seamless fashion. The construction of a simulation grid, for example, can be achieved simply with the tools available in Eclipse Office, however, more advanced and complex geological models could be constructed by calling Grid and Flogrid as submodules.

[00075] Functional Requirements

[00076] It is essential that base functionality is both simple to use and robust. The Eclipse Office product software 46c will be used across the hardware range from PC's to UNIX workstations, and therefore it should not require high end graphics performance. The Eclipse Office software 46c should be as memory efficient as possible, ideally being able to run on a minimum configuration of a 486/66 PC with 20 Mb of RAM.

[00077] Data Management

[00078] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 is capable of doing the following:

1. read existing Eclipse simulator software 46b simulation decks and
determine relevant sections,
2. keep a record of all data dependencies between scenarios and
prevent conflicting situations from ruining the simulation,

3. validate individual data sections to ensure all options selected
have all relevant data specified,
4. support data communication to/from the simulator engines,
5. support data communication to/from Flogrid (recall that the “Flogrid gridding software” is disclosed in prior pending U.S. patent application serial number 09/034,701, filed in the U.S. on March 4, 1998, which is based on a Great Britain patent application number 9727288.4 filed December 24, 1997, the disclosure of which has already been incorporated by reference into this specification),
6. support data communication to/from the PVTi preprocessor program 52b of figure 12,
7. support data communication to/from the Schedule preprocessor
program 52d1 of figure 12, and
8. support data communication to/from the SCAL preprocessor program 52c of figure 12.

[00079] Reservoir Description 82 of figure 15

[00080] The Eclipse Office software 46c provides tools to allow for the generation of grid geometry and grid properties, including maps, faults, boundaries, wells, aquifers, layers, grid properties, ~~and~~ simulation grid builder, and other general abilities. Each of these will be discussed in detail, as follows:

1. Maps
 - (a) Import of maps (CPS-3, ZMAP+, ascii generic)
 - (b) Ability to digitize contour maps (multi-contour and single

point contour, e.g., porosity at well locations)

2. Faults
 - (a) Importation of vertical fault traces (ascii generic)
 - (b) Ability to digitize fault traces
 - (c) Ability to edit fault trace
 - (d) Ability to set variable transmissibility multipliers along fault length
3. Boundaries
 - (a) Importation of reservoir boundaries (ascii generic)
 - (b) Ability to digitize reservoir boundaries
 - (c) Ability to edit reservoir boundary shape
4. Wells
 - (a) Import of well locations (ascii generic)
 - (b) Ability to digitize and edit well locations (vertical and horizontal) - supports manual entry of well coordinates
 - (c) Ability to read and display deviated well tracks
5. Aquifers
 - (a) Ability to attach aquifers as boundary conditions
 - (b) Ability to define aquifer volume and properties
 - (c) Ability to supply/enter aquifer influence tables
 - (d) Ability to define aquifers as numerical or analytical
6. Layers
 - (a) Ability to supply a single top or base map, and a thickness

map for each layer

- (b) Ability to supply constant values across a reservoir layer

(e.g., thickness, porosity, permeability, etc)

- (c) Ability to attach the same map to more than one layer
- (d) Ability to support a mixture of top/base maps with thickness maps to allow explicit shale modeling

7. Grid Properties

- (a) Ability to sample maps to set grid properties (real numbers)

- (b) Ability to sample map/property to set logical grid properties

(integers - e.g. rock type)

- (c) Ability to supply (and store) mathematical correlation relating one property (e.g. porosity or depth) to another (e.g,

permeability) and provide means of varying that based on a third (non-simulation) property (e.g., clay volume, or rock type)

- (d) Ability to globally or locally set kv/kh

- (e) Ability to provide local cell value modifiers in the form of

multipliers (to be varied by scenario)

- (f) Ability to view, set, and edit properties on an areal or vertical region basis (e.g., constant porosity across this region) including those of a single cell either graphically or

via a keyword editor

- (g) Ability to view grid properties on an areal or cross section viewer
 - (h) Ability to contour, map and display derived grid properties (such as calculated hydrocarbon pore volume thickness) and save/copy these contours to a new map
 - (i) Ability to read simulator output files and input
8. Simulation grid builder - support for the creation (and editing) of corner point geometry grids will be provided by Grid and Flogrid
- (a) Ability to generate multi-layer PEBI grids based on well locations, faults and reservoir boundaries
 - (b) Ability to generate a fixed cell size (e.g., 200 m) grid within a given boundary
 - (c) Ability to generate both 2D and 3D single well (radial) models
 - (d) Ability to generate a cross sectional model
 - (e) Ability to sub divide reservoir layers for simulation
 - (f) Ability to generate local cartesian and radial grid refinements
 - (g) Ability to enter flux boundary locations and generate the flux files from a base run and support new case generation utilizing those fluxes automatically
9. General
- (a) Ability to keep grid geometry separate from cell properties to allow different scenarios to be run on exactly the same grid

- (b) Ability to read existing block center and corner point grids for display
- (c) Ability to read existing grid properties for display and contouring purposes (only final values need be stored - e.g., in case when multiple edits have been made in existing data deck)
- (d) Ability to read and display existing LGR definitions (but not edit unless created in Eclipse Office initially)
- (e) Ability to call “Grid” (and ultimately “Flogrid”) to build simulation grids and properties
- (f) Ability to read and display existing regional definitions (e.g., flux regions, rock type regions, etc)
- (g) Must write full grid geometry file, and initial properties file for post processing
- (h) Ability to view and edit engineering input (e.g., the map or correlation used to generate the property), keyword input (the simulator input), or graphically (color filled block display)
- (i) Ability to support user supplied include files (for third party applications)

[00081] Fluid Properties

[00082] PVT (see block 84 of figure 15)

[00083] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. provide correlations and simple equations of state to generate PVT properties for: water, dead oil, volatile oil

- (including multiple undersaturated curves), gas condensate, dry gas, and “n” component mixtures,
2. provide graphical, keyword and engineering (correlation panel) displays of these PVT properties; these should be a phase plot for compositional models and GOR/Bo/uo vs P for black oil (similarly for gas),
 3. support the reading and editing of existing keyword files in keyword form, and store regional variations as specified,
 4. support the calling of PVT/PVTi to generate PVT properties,
 5. support the variation of PVT properties with depth (GOR/bubble point pressure, Bo, oil API, fluid composition) as well as regional variations
 6. support the use of the underlying calculator to generate these properties should a user have a preferred correlation,
 7. support passive phase tracers,
 8. support active brine tracking, and the variation of water properties with salinity,
 9. support non-isothermal and isothermal runs, including the variation of PVT properties with temperature, and
 10. support the setting of the rate of gas resolution/gas vaporization.

[00084] SCAL (see block 86 in figure 15)

[00085] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. support generation of relative permeability curves through Corey exponents, including regional variation of end points and exponents,

2. support direct entry/file import of relative permeability curves, and regional variation,
3. accept and support normalized relative permeability and capillary pressure curves,
4. support J Functions for capillary pressure generation,
5. support use of end point variation vs depth and a function of other parameters (e.g. rock properties)[to denormalize curves], and
6. support the calling of the SCAL program for more detailed analysis.

[00086] Specification of initial contacts and pressures

[00087] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will support three ways to specify initial conditions: (1) Equilibration, (2) Enumeration, and (3) Restart (Standard and SAE/LOAD). Each of these three ways, plus an additional general set of support conditions, will be discussed below, as follows:

[00088] Equilibration - The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. support the entry of initial contact depths and reference pressure,
2. support the reading of an existing data file to set (and allow editing of) initial contact depths and reference pressures,
3. support regional variation of contacts and pressures,
4. support threshold pressures between regions/along faults to control flow between equilibration regions, and
5. support “enhanced” options, such as improved fluid in place calculations.

[00089] Enumeration - The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will support the setting of all relevant arrays through one of the following means:

1. explicit setting - single value/cell through keyword editor or include file,
2. calculated setting - provision of pressure and saturation profile through use of calculator

[00090] Restart - In figure 17, block 54c “Restart”, the Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will support the restarting of a run (using the same grid) from its base run. Restart (54c) should be date or report step specified, and the user should see all available restart dates. The Eclipse Office software 46c must ensure that the Schedule section is in line with this date through use of the SKIPREST keyword.

[00091] General - The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13:

1. will support the initialization of a simulation model for fluid in place determination,
2. could be extended to support general material balance analysis, and
3. could be extended to support RFT pressure analysis to compare and set regional variations in contacts and gradients.

[00092] Set up of well and gathering tree information

[00093] General:

[00094] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will support the intuitive and easy to use interface of areal well locations, the ability to double click for item editing, and drag and drop (where appropriate). Editing can be facilitated by double clicking on a well (etc) or clicking with the right mouse button for a drop down menu. The Eclipse Office software 46c will support an easy method of setting controls for multiple wells/groups at a time. This could be achieved by rubber banding, CTRL-clicking, wildcarding or some other means. In addition, the Eclipse Office software 46c will call the VFPI preprocessor program (52d2 of figure 12 and 15) to construct pipeline and well lift curves.

[00095] Wells:

[00096] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. support the reverse engineering of existing input decks to determine an approximate (x, y) location from the cell (i, j) and other interpretable information (rates, kinds, status, etc),
2. support vertical, deviated and horizontal wells, and determine the completed cells,
3. support the entry of well completed intervals based on depth or logical representations (e.g. oil leg, water leg, gas cap, layers 1-4, 9000-9500 ft)
4. call the Schedule preprocessor program 52d1 of figure 12 to handle complex analyses,
5. support the variation in time of:

- a) well rates and targets (oil, water, gas, liquid, bhp, thp),
 - b) well controls (rate specified, pressure control etc),
 - c) well kinds (injectors, producers),
 - d) well status (open, close, queue for drilling),
 - e) well downtime factors,
 - f) well lift curve,
 - g) completed interval properties (skin, kh, datum, depth, etc), and
 - h) well workover parameters,
6. support one value per time/report step - it will not interpolate or average historical data, and
 7. support the concept of drilling queues, and be able to 'spot' future wells on its areal display.

[00097] Groups:

[00098] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. support the flexible generation of well groups through:
 - a) reading an existing data deck,
 - b) graphically providing icons for group nodes and setting sons (wells of groups) through drag/drop - note: multiple sons can be specified by rubber banding, CTRL clicking, etc, to highlight a number of items before drag/drop, and
 - c) graphically setting and highlighting (in different color) groups with no direct control mode,
2. support the variation in time of:
 - a) group rates and targets (oil, water, gas and liquid),
 - b) group controls (rate specified, potential/guiderate controlled, no control)

- c) group controls (production/injection targets, voidage replacement, re-injection)
- 3. support the import of fluids of a different composition/phase for
re-injection/top-up,
- 4. support the definition of a separator train and its conditions,
- 5. support the setting up of gas field sales contracts, and
- 6. support the concept of 'equipment':
 - a) gas plants,
 - b) well head chokes,
 - c) satellite injection/production, and
 - d) compressor/pumps and their fluid consumption (note: equipment may be placed at any node in the group hierarchy).

[00099] Networks:

[000100] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

- 1. support the definition of line properties and the attachment of VFP tables to network branches,
- 2. support the setting of group nodes as manifolds (common pressure points), and
- 3. support the setting of fixed pressure nodes.

[000101] Output Controls

[000102] In general, the role of the ASCII print file should be de-emphasized. All tabular output should be able to be generated from the graphics/restart files. The Eclipse Office software 46c will generate a

standard list of output which will ensure the standard engineering analyses can be conducted. Specifically, this list needs to contain: (1) field, group and well rates (oil, water, gas, liquid), (2) field, group and well pressures (field datum average pressure, node pressures well bhp, thp if setup), (3) field, group and well cumulatives, and (4) cell pressures (datum corrected) and phase saturations.

[000103] The Eclipse Office software 46c will support the selection features by topic and automatically generate a list of applicable (optional) output for this run - e.g., if tracers are present in the run, then automatically select all tracer outputs, but allow user to disable those if required. This list should also contain simulator performance vectors. In addition, the Eclipse Office software 46c will support panel selection for grid based properties. These should be written to graphics files for subsequent viewing graphically or in a tabular form.

[000104] Multiple Scenarios

[000105] Once enabled, the multiple scenario option should simply present the end user with a list of variables that can be “scenarioised” (i.e., made into scenarios). Individual scenarios are then created simply by changing the relevant section to reflect the ranges of that parameter to be used.

[000106] The Eclipse Office software 46c will support the ability to “scenarioise” the following parameters: (1) fault multipliers, (2) grid properties (including correlation parameters - to allow support for calculator generated properties), (3) grid cell size (for regular cartesian grids), (4) relative permeability curves (Corey exponents and table end points), (5) initial contact depths, (6) initial pressures, (7) aquifer parameters (size, strength), (8) PVT correlation parameters, (9) well

targets and limits (rates and pressures), (10) group targets, (11) drilling queues, and (12) well workover parameters (water cut/GOR limits, etc).

[000107] The Eclipse Office software 46c will support the use of different include files for each scenario - note: this will allow support of external products to setup multiple scenarios (e.g. PVT or GRID). The Eclipse Office software 46c will keep track of these scenarios and allow submission of all or a particular grouping automatically.

[000108] Job Submission and Control

[000109] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13:

1. will support both local and remote platforms for execution of simulation jobs,
2. will allow jobs to be queued (internally) so that memory is efficiently used,
3. will allow job prioritization (e.g. small quick jobs should be able to jump in front - both interactively and in batch)
4. will allow viewing of current jobs, the job queue, and job status,
5. should support an underlying queue structure where installed,
6. will support multiple scenarios to be singly submitted and queued,
7. will support an option of interactive results viewing with all of the functionality of the results viewing module,
8. will allow interactive simulator control with the following options:
 - a) abort run
 - b) pause run

- c) advance to next report step, write restart (optional) and stop

[000110] Viewing and Analysis of Results

[000111] This module must be available while a simulation model is proceeding. The viewing and analysis of results needs to be highly intuitive - extensive use should be made of mouse clicks to obtain point/cell values or to set particular attributes (e.g. line or axis attributes).

[000112] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. support a number of standard plot types (e.g. well phase rates vs time, well bhp vs time). These standard plot types should then be available for wells/groups/etc at the click of a mouse button; the default x axis needs to be calendar years,
2. support the user configuration of the standard plot types, including defining additional ones,
3. support the plotting of user entered/supplied data along with simulation results,
4. support the creation of user vectors/solutions through the underlying calculator,
5. support 2D areal and cross section solution views that can be stepped through time both manually and automatically; interactive interrogation of cell values should be supported on both views,
6. support color filled contouring of results
7. support the clicking of well/group/platform to plot its rate history (these plots should be user definable),

8. call GRAF for more flexible and batch plotting options; the Eclipse Office software 46c will create the relevant GRF for loading the data automatically into GRAF,
9. support generation of tabular based output currently written in fixed form to the ASCII print file; specifically, the generation of Fluid in Place and well reports need to be supported,
10. support the generation of monthly/quarterly/annual averages of rate data - note: this could be via the Schedule preprocessor program,
11. support viewing of cell based data either graphically or in its tabular matrix form,
12. support the analysis of multiple scenarios through parameterization,
13. support curve fitting/regression for experimental design,
14. support a flexible means (wildcard/rubber banding/CTRL clicking) to gather data to line plot - note: an option here should be the ability to sum these data items together to produce a total pot for the flexible group, and
15. support an easy to use means of selecting variables to plot - this should not just be a list of mnemonics.

[000113] Report Generation

[000114] The Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 will:

1. provide a series of pre-defined report templates,
2. generate formatted input to a spreadsheet for economic analysis,

3. support calculator scripts to conduct analysis not directly supported, and
4. generate reports on: (1) scenario basis, (2) case basis - comparing scenarios and giving spread, (3) project basis - comparing anything.

[000115] Walkthroughs

[000116] The following two examples are presented which will demonstrate the usefulness of the Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13:

[000117] Case 1 - New Model

[000118] A user is running on a networked personal computer.

[000119] First, define the project. This includes the title, directory, areal extent, and primary units system.

[000120] Second, create the case. This includes defining phases, and selecting treatment (isothermal, compositional, etc).

[000121] Third, define data. This includes:

1. building a reservoir model by: loading tops map, loading faults, entering layer properties, entering well locations and providing porosity values to generate poro map (interpolate and sample), generating x/y permeabilities through poro/perm correlation, and setting kv/kh,
2. setting fluid properties by PVT correlation,
3. setting relative permeability and capillary pressure data (Corey exponents and J function),

4. setting initial contacts and reference pressure, and
5. setting well data by: setting completed depths, targets and rate limits, spotting new wells that could be drilled, defining group/gathering structure, setting equipment limits/controls as field/separator level (injection capacities, separator limits, etc), and setting injection and reinjection controls.

[000122] Fourth, run the simulation model. Observe results, and decide that the run has fallen off plateau rate too early, so kill the job. Modify existing scenario to add drilling queue. Re-run through to the end.

[000123] Fifth, plot and analyze the results. Generate plots of: field oil rate vs time, cumulative oil vs time, field oil rate vs cumulative oil, field pressure vs cumulative oil, and average well bhp over all producers against time and add field pressure to plot. Create a standard report including plots in relevant places.

[000124] Case 2 - Existing data model

[000125] First, define the project. This includes title, directory, areal extent, and primary units system.

[000126] Second, create the case - initialize all data.

[000127] Third, create a new multiple scenario. This includes the following:

1. change fault multipliers (defined using "Faults" keyword,
2. change PVT
3. change to black oil, through correlation, and plot against old PVT
4. add two new wells, set guide rates and pressure limits

5. change group limits to add new group
6. submit model to run for 10 years
7. analyze results
8. create new scenario
9. restart from 5 years, adding 2 new wells to an existing group
10. run model
11. plot results and compare last 5 years on both
12. add original compositional results by reading existing summary files
13. read user data file of measured well RFT pressure vs depth at time of 1year, and compare to simulated response
14. save and quit project

[000128] 3.0 Specifications

[000129] The Eclipse Office Data Model

[000130] In the Eclipse Office software 46c of figures 10 through 13 data model, there will be a database to hold the structure of the project. The project is made up of a base case, which is a simulator input file. From the base case, many cases and scenarios can arise in a “tree like structure” (see figure 14). The cases and scenarios in the “tree like structure” of figure 14 are, in fact, simulator input files. For each case, the database will hold the following information:

1. case definition, and
2. Include filenames for each section of the simulator input.

[000131] Each section of the Case Builder/Data Manager 46c2 of figure 15 in the Eclipse Office software 46c will produce an Include file for the

case (the grid geometry and the properties will be separate from the Include files). The Include files produced by the Eclipse Office software 46c contain additional information as comments, e.g., PVT correlation types, Temperature, Gas Gravity, etc. Although the user can save intermediate files as Include files, there is no method for tracking these, e.g., saving different PVT correlations.

[000132] Application Layout

[000133] Refer now to figure 19 for a dialog depicting the Eclipse Office software 46c application layout.

[000134] In figure 19, a screen display is illustrated, and the screen display of figure 19 is displayed on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figures 10 through 13 upon start-up. There will also be a log window displayed. The main window of figure 19, however, consists of a menu bar, preprocessor pushbuttons (Flogrid, PVTi, SCAL, Schedule, VFPI) and post processor push buttons (Graf, RTView, HM), and Eclipse Office software 46c modules displayed as push buttons (Project, Data, Execute, Results, Report, Exit).

[000135] Menu Bar Items - referring to the Application Layout of figure 19

[000136] File

1. Open - file dialog for database files
2. ASCII Read - file dialog for ascii database files
3. About - panel to show/enter project details
4. Save - saves current database file
5. Save As - file dialog to save new database file
6. ASCII Write - file dialog to save new ascii database file

7. close - closes current database
8. Exit - exits the program

[000137] Module

1. Project
2. Data
3. Execute
4. Results
5. Report

[000138] Options

1. Units - choice between oil field, metric, etc
2. Directories - panel
3. Configuration - submenu
 - a) system - panel with network information
 - b) software - panel with installed pre/post processor programs/versions
 - c) simulator - panel with simulator options - note: the software and simulator options will come from decoding the Password with the Configuration file

[000139] Utilities

1. About - displays panel with Eclipse Office details
2. Calculator - general calculator facility
3. Text Editor - general editing facility

[000140] Window

1. Tile
2. Cascade
3. Minimise - general window facilities
4. Restore
5. Log Window

[000141] Help

1. About - interactive on-line help system

[000142] Pre/Post Processor Push Buttons

1. Pressing the button will launch the selected program

[000143] Eclipse Office software 46c Modules of the Application Layout of figure 19

[000144] Pressing the Eclipse Office module pushbuttons of figure 19 (i.e., the “Project” module pushbutton, the “Data” module pushbutton, the “Execute” module pushbutton, the “Results” module pushbutton, the “Report” module pushbutton, and the Exit module pushbutton in figure 19) will bring to the front the selected module. Let us now consider each of the Eclipse Office modules individually below.

[000145] “Project” module of figure 19 - the Case/Project Manager 46c1 of figure 13 and figure 14

[000146] Workflow

[000147] In figure 20, a workflow or functional block diagram associated with the Case/Project manager 46c1 of figures 13 and 14 is illustrated.

In figure 20, the functional block diagram of the Case manager 46c1 includes the following: (1) problem definition 116, (2) Project Specification (units, directories, areal location) 118, (3) Under Project specification, Specification of phases and treatment 120, and (4) Under Project Specification, specification of optional extensions 122.

[000148] Layout

[000149] In figure 21, a dialog depicting the Case/Project manager 46c1 layout is illustrated. The Case/Project manager 46c1 layout (or “window screen display”) consists of a Menu Bar, Icons, and the current Project displayed as a hierarchical “tree like structure”. In figure 21, the screen display of figure 21 is displayed on the “recorder or display or 3D viewer” 44e of figures 10 through 13 upon entry to the “Case/Project manager” if an existing project has been opened. The display area will be blank if the project is empty.

[000150] Nomenclature

1. Base - first simulator run of the current project
2. Case - any subsequent simulator run where the grid geometry has been changed from its parent
3. Scenario - any subsequent simulator run where the grid geometry remains the same as its parent

[000151] Case and Scenarios will be color coded.

[000152] Menu Bar Items

[000153] File

1. Track - file dialog to select file and view history of file
2. Close - closes Project Manager module

[000154] Case

1. About - panel to show/enter case details
2. View - views input and output files associated with selected case/scenario
3. Load - loads selected case/scenario
4. Load As - loads selected case/scenario as a new case/scenario
5. Create - creates a new case/scenario from an existing simulator run
6. Delete - removes selected case/scenario and all children from project

[000155] Options

1. Base - will set the selected case/scenario as the Base case
2. Restart - displays restart tree if selected case/scenario is a restart run

[000156] "Data" module of the Application Layout of figure 19 - the Case Builder/Data Manager 46c2 of figures 13 and 15

[000157] Workflow

[000158] In figures 22a and 22b, a workflow or functional block diagram associated with the Case Builder/Data manager 46c2 of figures 13 and 15 is illustrated.

[000159] Refer now to figure 22a for the initial blocks of the functional block diagram of the Case Builder 46c2.

- [000160]** 1. Define and Analyze Reservoir Properties - block 124
- a) Structure
 - i) Boundaries - block 128
 - ii) Structure Maps - block 128
 - iii) Faults - block 128
 - iv) Aquifer definition - block 128
 - b) Geometry - block 130
 - i) PEBI - block 132
 - ii) Cartesian block gridder - block 132a of 132
 - a) cross section generator - block 133
 - iii) Radial Gridder - block 134
 - iv) Detailed Gridder via Flogrid - block 134
 - c) Rock Properties - block 136
 - i) map sampling - block 138
 - ii) correlation (e.g. poro/perm) - block 138
 - iii) constant properties - block 138a of 138
 - a) by layer - block 140
 - b) by areal painter - block 140
 - d) PVT - block 142
 - i) correlation - block 144
 - ii) Simple EoS - block 144
 - iii) Detailed Analysis (via PVTi) - block 144
 - iv) Direct Input - block 144
 - v) Region Painter - block 144

[000161] Refer now to figure 22b for the remaining blocks of the functional block diagram of the Case Builder 46c2.

[000162] 1. Define and Analyze Reservoir Properties - block 146

- a) SCAL - block 148
 - i) Corey Exponents - block 148
 - ii) Detailed Analysis via SCAL - block 148
 - iii) Direct Input - block 148
 - iv) Region Painter - block 148
- b) ~~Initialization~~ Initialisation - Block 150
 - i) Contacts and Static Pressure - block 150
 - ii) Region Painter - block 150
 - a) simple RFT pressure vs. Depth analysis
 - iii) Calculated (Enumeration) - block 150
 - iv) Material Balance Analysis - block 150
 - a) STOOIP determination
 - v) Restart from previous run - block 150
- c) Wells, Groups and Network - block 152
 - i) Wells - block 152
 - a) Detailed Analysis via Schedule
 - b) Basic setup (as in PEBI)
 - c) Decline curve analysis
 - ii) Group and Network Setup - block 152
 - a) Network hierarchy
 - b) Lift curve analysis via VFPI
 - c) Prediction generator
- d) Output - block 154
 - i) Frequency

[000163] Layout

[000164] Refer now to figure 23 which illustrates a dialog depicting the Case Builder/Data Manager (46c2 of figures 13 and 15) layout.

[000165] In figure 23, the Case Builder/Data Manager (46c2 of figures 13 and 15) window or screen display consists of a menu bar, preprocessor push buttons, icons and a display of the current model (case/scenario) representing the model area together with the wells. This will be blank if a new project.

[000166] Menu Bar Items in figure 23

[000167] File

1. Close – closes Data Manager module

[000168] Section

1. Define
2. Description
3. PVT
4. SCAL - opens the selected section
5. Initialization
6. Schedule
7. Output

[000169] Modules

[000170] Case Definition - the case definition section consists of “Menu Bar Items” and “Folder Items” specifying the simulator, model type, phases and other options

- a) Menu Bar Items
 - i) File
 - a) Close - closes case definition section
- b) Folder Items
 - i) General
 - a) Simulator - Black Oil, Compositional or Thermal
 - b) Start Date
 - c) Title
 - d) Model Type - 3D, X-section, Radial, 1-D
 - e) Run type - Restart, load/Save
 - ii) Phases
 - a) Oil, Water, Gas, dissolved Gas, Vaporized Oil, Gas-Wat
 - iii) Options
 - a) Tracers, Temp, API, Dual Poro, Miscible
 - iv) Solution
 - a) Impes, Fully Implicit, AIM, IMPSAT

[000171] Reservoir Description 82 of figure 15

[000172] Refer now to figure 24 which illustrates a dialog depicting the Reservoir Description (82) layout. The Reservoir Description 82 is shown in figure 15.

[000173] Additional options will include:

1. import and display of corner point and block centered geometry
2. simple gridding options, e.g., x meter spaced grid
3. re-gridding of corner point model to PEBI grid
4. aquifer support

[000174] PVT 84 of figure 15

[000175] Refer now to figure 25 which illustrates a dialog depicting the PVT (84) layout. The PVT storage medium 84 is shown in figure 15.

[000176] Additional options (not shown in figure 25) will include:

1. import of PVT data from existing dataset
2. support for more than one PVT region
3. compositional and thermal keywords
4. region painter

[000177] Menu Bar Items

[000178] File

1. close - closes PVT section
2. Import - reads PVT data from existing dataset
3. PVTi - runs PVTi
4. Save - saves as an Include file

[000179] View

1. Plot - plots data
2. Keywords - displays keywords
3. Correlation - displays correlation inputs and plots

[000180] Region

1. Add - adds a new region
2. Edit - edits regions
3. Delete - deletes a region

[000181] SCAL 86 of figure 15

[000182] Refer now to figure 26 which illustrates a dialog depicting the SCAL (86) layout. The SCAL storage medium 86 is shown in figure 15.

[000183] Additional options (not shown in figure 26) will include:

1. import of SCAL data from existing dataset
2. support for more than one SCAL region
3. three phase relative permeability correlation
4. region painter

[000184] Menu Bar Items

[000185] File

1. Close - closes SCAL section
2. Import - reads SCAL data from existing dataset
3. SCAL - runs SCAL program
4. Save - saves as Include file

[000186] View

1. Plot - plots data
2. Keywords - displays keywords

3. Correlation - displays correlation input and plots

[000187] Region

1. Add - adds a new region
2. Edit - Edits regions
3. Delete - deletes a region

[000188] Initialization 88 of figure 15

[000189] Initialization - The Initialization section consists of a Menu Bar and Icons.

[000190] Menu Bar Items

[000191] File

1. Close - closes initialization section
2. Import - reads initialization data from existing dataset
3. Save - saves as Include file

[000192] Method

1. Equilibration
2. Enumeration
3. Restart

[000193] Restart

[000194] This will display a panel of the saved restart numbers and dates from which the user can select the appropriate one.

[000195] Enumeration

[000196] This will display a window allowing input of initial values.

[000197] Menu Bar Items

[000198] File

1. Close - closes window

[000199] Options

1. Plot - plots data

[000200] Equilibration

[000201] This will display a window for contact depth input

[000202] Menu Bar Items

[000203] File

1. close - close window

[000204] Options

1. Plot - plots data
2. keywords - displays keywords

[000205] Schedule/Production database 92 of figure 15

[000206] Refer now to figure 27 which illustrates a dialog depicting the Schedule database (92) layout. The Schedule/Production storage medium 92 is shown in figure 15.

[000207] The Schedule window of figure 27 consists of a Menu Bar, Icons, and a display of the current model (case/scenario) representing the model area together with the wells and their group hierarchy.

[000208] Menu Bar Items

[000209] File

1. Close - closes Schedule module
2. Schedule - runs Schedule program
3. VFPI - runs VFPI program
4. Save - saves as Include file

[000210] Edit

1. Well
2. Group - selects appropriate item and displays
3. Network - panel for entry/view of data

[000211] Group

1. Define - defines new group

[000212] Time

1. Event times - defines event times

[000213] Control

1. tuning - sets tuning control for whole run
2. Timestep - defines timesteps

[000214] Output

[000215] The output window consists of a Menu Bar and Icons. The main display area is blank.

[000216] Menu Bar Items

[000217] File

1. Close - closes output section
2. Import - import from existing dataset
3. Save - saves as Include file

[000218] Vector

1. Field
2. Well
3. Group - selects appropriate item for output
4. Regions

[000219] Multiple Scenarios

[000220] The multiple scenarios window consists of a Menu Bar and Icons. The main display area is blank. This section will allow the user to easily specify a number of realizations to be run on this case/scenario. These realizations will be specified in an engineering terminology, e.g., poro/perm relationship, well rates, different PVT data, etc. This will ensure that the Grid Geometry of the model cannot be changed and therefore the runs can be compared.

[000221] Run Manager 46c3 of figure13 and figure 16

[000222] Refer now to figure 28 which illustrates a workflow or functional block diagram illustrating the function of the Run Manager 46c3 of figure 13 and 16.

[000223] The functional block diagram of the Run Manager 46c3, which is shown in figure 28, is duplicated below as follows:

[000224] Run Model - block 156

1. Simulation Model - block 158
 - (a) Submission to:
 - i) platform of choice - block 162
 - ii) Queuing System - block 162
2. Network Analysis (based on VFP tables) - block 160
 - a) rate data from:
 - i) simulation run - block 164
 - ii) constant Pl - block 164
 - iii) decline curve - block 164

[000225] Layout

[000226] The “Janus” program will form the basis of the Run Manager 46c3 within the Eclipse Office software 46c. Currently, “Janus” submits, controls and monitors multiple simulator runs through the PVM interface.

[000227] Refer now to figure 29 which illustrates the Run Manager 46c3 window. Figure 29 illustrates a view of “Janus”, which forms the basis of the Run Manager. The Run Manager 46c3 window of figure 29 consists of a menu bar and icons.

[000228] Results Viewer 1A of figure 13

[000229] Refer now to figure 30 for the workflow or functional block diagram of the Results viewer 1A of figure 13. The functional block diagram of the results viewer 1A of figure 30 is duplicated below, as follows:

1. Run Manager (monitor and control) - block 166
2. Results viewer (real time updates) - high quality hardcopy - block 168
 - a) Vector data - block 170
 - i) predefined layouts for main plots
 - a) ability to plot anything against anything including observed data (RFT, PLT)
 - b) Solution data - block 172
 - i) 2D areal - 2D cross section
 - a) well locations/tracks
 - 1) contours and cell based color displays
 - a) ability for derived quantities
 - ii) optional 3D display
 - c) Run controller (as Janus) - block 174
 - i) STOP, PAUSE
 - ii) Advance and write RESTART

[000230] The results viewer 1A window (screen display) consists of a Menu Bar, Post Processor pushbuttons, Icons, and a display of the current model (case/scenario) representing the model area together with the wells. This will be blank if a no case/scenario is selected.

[000231] Report Generator 1B of figure 13

[000232] Refer now to figure 31 for the workflow or functional block diagram of the Report Generator 1B of figure 13. The functional block diagram of the report generator 1B of figure 13, as shown in figure 31, is duplicated below, as follows:

[000233] Report Generator - block 176

1. Template based (removes fixed simulator print file)
2. Collates data AND plots from any (or all) runs within a project
3. Flexible to allow tabular output to be generated for post processing (e.g. economic analysis)
 - a) provide calculator scripts to conduct common analyses
4. Full support for 'local' printer drivers (e.g. MS windows)

[000234] Layout

[000235] The report generator 1B window (screen display) consists of a Menu Bar, Icons, and a display of the current model (case/scenario) representing the model area together with the wells. This will be blank if a no case/scenario is selected.

[000236] The invention being thus described, it will be obvious that the same may be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention, and all such modifications as would be obvious to one skilled in the art are intended to be included within the scope of the following claims.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A simulation system is responsive to a plurality of sets of input data for ~~simulating an earth formation located in the vicinity of an oilfield reservoir, generating a set of simulation results in response to the simulation, and displaying the set of simulation results.~~ The simulation system includes a case manager adapted for organizing and managing ~~the~~ a plurality of sets of input data being used by the simulation system. The case manager includes a plurality of case scenarios organized in a tree-like structure, some case scenarios being supersets of other case scenarios in the tree-like structure. An operator selects one or more of the case scenarios in the case manager. A case builder receives keywords associated with the one or more of the case scenarios selected by the operator ~~in addition to keywords originating from one or more pre-processor programs and possibly raw data, allowing the operator to edits and/or changes~~ edit or change all the keywords from the selected case scenarios when necessary and ~~pre-processor keywords in response to editing actions taken by the operator, and , responsive thereto,~~ generates a set of edited keywords representing edited case scenarios. A run manager ~~responds to the set of edited case scenarios from the case builder by submitting~~ submits the edited case scenarios to a simulator , ~~the simulator responding to the edited case scenarios from the run manager by executing and thereby generating~~ which generates a set of simulation results , ~~the set of simulation results from the simulator being~~ that are stored in a results file for subsequent display and viewing. The run manager ~~receives the set of simulation results from the results file in addition to the set of edited case scenarios from the case builder thereby enabling an operator to monitor and compare via the run manager the set of simulation results received from the results file with the set of edited case scenarios received from the case builder.~~ A results

~~viewer will display the set of simulation results generated by the simulator and a report generator will generate one or more reports which record the set of simulation results. This Abstract is given for the sole purpose of allowing a searcher to easily determine the content of the disclosure in this application.~~